Vigil in villages along the Bengal borders

4423. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the police and intelligence agencies have stepped up vigil in villages along the border with Bangladesh and Nepal in North Bengal following reports of suspicious movements of some people in these areas in the wake of the conflict in Afghanistan;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government has agreed to provide all help and assistance to the State Government of West Bengal in unearthing subversive activities on Bengal border;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent these activities have been checked on Bengal border?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Union Government provides help and assistance to all the State Governments, including the Government of West Bengal, for checking illegal cross-border activities taking place along our borders with Bangladesh and Nepal. Such assistance includes strengthening the Border Management by deployment of border guarding forces, gearing up of intelligence machinery, improved coordination between the different intelligence agencies, modernisation and upgration of State Police Forces with advanced and sophisticated weapons, strengthening of State's Administrative infrastructure along border areas etc. These measures have helped in containing illegal cross-border activities. However, there is always scope for further strengthening of border monitoring and surveillance systems.

Counter-insurgency operations by CRPF

4424. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Reserve Police Force have taken over counter-insurgency operations in the country alongwith Rastriya Rifles of the Army and the Border Security Forces;

(b) if so, whether it is in the process of upgrading its weaponry and communication systems;

(c) if so, whether they are also trying to start an in-house training school; and

(d) if so, to what extent these steps have helped to check the counter-insurgency operation in the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The upgradation of Weaponry and communications System of the forces is a continuous process. The modernization plan of CRPF has already been approved by Government recently.

(c) The Training institutes of CRPF are conducting training in various fields according to the requirements of the force.

(d) All efforts are made to control the militancy/insurgency and CRPF has been successfully assisting the State Government to control such activities.

Assistance provided to villagers in the border areas

4425. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the month of December, 2001 thousands of villages in States along the border with Pakistan had headed for the interiors;

(b) if so, whether in spite of the security forces in Punjab, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir have been trying to convince villages that the situation has not escalated to an alarming level but they left their places; and

(c) what sort of help was provided by the States as well as the security agencies to these villagers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.